



AIA New York State 2026 Excelsior Awards Guidelines

DEADLINES

- **March 9** - Registration, Entry Fee Deadline and Project Upload Deadline
- **Week of March 23** - Jury Meeting
- **May 6** - AIANYS Excelsior & Professional Awards Celebration

FEE

\$320 per submission

ELIGIBILITY

Only New York State funded projects (fully or partially) will be eligible for an award. Projects may be owned by the state, a municipality, a non-profit or a private entity, however all projects **must serve the public** in order to be eligible. Projects whose only relationship to New York State is tax credits or bonds will not be eligible. All submitted design projects must have been completed since January 1, 2017.

WINNERS

Projects will receive awards. Consultants, clients and agency representatives will be credited for the work. Projects can be submitted by agencies, consultants or clients.

The jury will judge projects on the following criteria:

Firmness: The submission demonstrates design based on sound architectural and engineering principles, including sustainable materials, systems and practices, as well as responsible use of public funds to achieve the maximum public benefit.

Commodity: The submission demonstrates design that is functional and impactful, providing socio-economic benefits to the surrounding community and advancing the owner's mission.

Delight: The submission demonstrates design that achieves beauty and harmony through respect for the surrounding context, understanding and consideration of human scale, and satisfaction of user needs, both explicit and implicit.



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CATEGORIES

The entrant must specify one category for each submission at the time the project is uploaded.

New Construction

Historic Preservation

Renovation/Addition

Landscape Architecture (New Construction or Rehabilitation) | Eligible projects can be funded by private or public sources. They must be either located on New York State property or part of a larger New York state funded projects. Examples may include a playground on a public school campus or a healing garden in a publicly funded hospital complex.

Public Art | Eligible projects can be funded by private or public sources. They must be either located on New York State property or part of a larger New York state funded projects. Examples may include a sculpture/monument in a publicly funded landscape, park, town square or building.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

A link to our submission site will be sent with your e-mail registration confirmation.

FORMAT

All Submissions are digital and should be composed of the following individual files:

- a. Photo Release Form(s) (PDF) – [Download Form here](#)
- b. Project Information Document (Word Doc)
- c. **Narrative** – This will be typed directly into the submission portal. The following questions **must** be answered to be considered for an award.
 - What were the sources of public financing? How much as a percentage of total construction cost comes from public funds?
 - Describe the building's or space's function.
 - Beyond basic function what is the greater social value of the submission?
 - How does the submission contribute to the life of the community of which it is a part?
- d. Up to ten (10) Site plans, floor plans
- e. Up to ten (10) project photos (jpg only). One image per photo.
- f. 300 word project description - This will be typed directly into the submission portal
- g. Contact information for main contractors and engineers involved with the project - This will be typed directly into the submission portal (company name, e-mail address)

Images and site plans are separate uploads, and up to ten (10) of each can be uploaded.



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These documents are what the jury will see; with the exception of the project identification information page, and photographer's release, **it must be completely anonymous, firm name, architect's name or previous awards cannot appear or entry will be disqualified.**

PHOTOGRAPHERS RELEASE FORM

If the project is selected for an award, the firm must provide at least three images used in the submission (300 dpi resolution) and a photographer's release form for each picture if the photographer is different.

You will be asked to indicate which **one** image you want to be used for publicity and the **two** images to be used during the multimedia awards presentation. These images used for the presentation may be different than the one selected for publicity. AIANYS may resize images to meet publication needs but will not alter or modify the images. [Download Form here.](#)

PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET

On the entrant's letterhead identify the architect(s), city state of the architect and full design and construction credits. Credits listed must include name and address of all design firm(s) and persons substantially contributing to the design of the project; client's name; constructors and/or construction manager's name(s); engineer(s) names; firm name and address of consultant(s); and project's name and location and photo credits listed in the manner desired to appear on a citation or photo caption. **Make sure the company name and submitting architect are included.**

Narrative An extended summary that addresses project goals, design methodology, construction process or artistic fabrication, results, cost effectiveness, timely delivery and overall significance. You must answer the required 4 questions within this narrative to qualify for an award. **This page must be completely anonymous. Do not list any firm names or individuals involved in the project or the entry will be disqualified.**

SITE PLAN, FLOOR PLAN(S)

These pages must be completely anonymous and should not include the firm name, architect's name or previous awards or the entry will be disqualified.

Following the narrative, insert the site plan, at a small scale, floor plan(s), elevations and sections

TEN (10) PROJECT IMAGES

You may include up to 10 images of the project in color or black and white photographs showing exterior and interior views. All images and photographs must be saved as jpegs. No other format will be accepted.

Photographs must be a minimum of 72 dpi resolution. **Multiple images per page are not permitted.**

Captions or text should not be embedded in the jpg files.

By submitting a project for consideration, the submitting architect represents and warrants to AIA New York State that they have provided a complete list of all those substantially contributing to the design of the project.



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Failure to provide a complete list may result in disqualification and/or a referral of the matter to the appropriate ethics body of the national office of the AIA. AIANYS accepts no responsibility for incomplete lists.

If any of the above is not included in the entry by the submission deadline, the entry will be disqualified.

2026 EXCELSIOR AWARD JURY

To be announced.

LIABILITY

AIA New York State assumes no liability for original drawings and submission materials or loss or damage to any part of the submission. AIA New York State retains the right to reproduce any of the submission materials in its publication, educational programs and websites. By making a submission, the entrant agrees that the information contained in the submission is correct and complete, and that the entrant will hold harmless AIA New York State for any and all damage arising out of the use of the information contained herein. Any errors or omissions are the complete responsibility of the entrant.

Questions: Please contact Cara Longobardi at clongobardi@aianys.org. Please label the subject line as 2026 Excelsior Awards.